

CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES COLLABORATIVE COMMISSION
MEETING NOTES – JANUARY 9, 2013
CITY HALL, SISTER CITIES ROOM

ATTENDANCE

Present

Rosario Casiano
Victoria Cattaneo
Councilman John Chapman
Mike Gilmore
Samuel Hanoura
J. Glenn Hopkins
Gregory C. Hutchings

Timothy Kennedy
Councilman Timothy Lovain
Mike Mackey
Tammy Mann
Sean McEneaney
Gwen Mullen
Jeffrey Murphy

Timothy Peterson
Sonia Price
Joyce Rawlings
Cynthia Skinner
Margaret Walsh
Marc Williams

Excused Absent

Emma Beall
William Chesley

Andria Cook
Rose Dawson

Officials

Dr. Madye Henson

Guests

Noraine Buttar
Charlotte Clinger
Lisa Gulli

Allen Lomax
Shelly Morgan
Lisette Torres

Staff Present

Jacqueline Coachman
Ron Frazier

Coleen Mann
Deborah Warren

Staff Absent

Carol Farrell
Barbara Farrington

WELCOME

Chair Tammy Mann opened the meeting with a welcome to the new City Council representatives to the Children, Youth & Families Collaborative Commission (CYFCC) – John Chapman and Timothy Lovain. Both spoke to their extensive experience with youth and youth serving organizations. Councilman Chapman, whose background is education, was a member of the Youth Policy Commission. Councilman Lovain has worked with the Gang Prevention Task Force, the United Way Board and SCAN.

Chair Mann also welcomed Sean McEneaney, who was appointed to CYFCC by the City Council in December. In addition, the City Council approved another term for Cynthia Skinner and Emma Beall.

APPROVAL OF DECEMBER MEETING MINUTES

There being no revisions, the minutes of the meeting of December 13 were approved unanimously.

PRESENTATION ON THE SUBSTANCE ABUSE PREVENTION COALITION OF ALEXANDRIA

A presentation by Allen Lomax, Chair of the Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition of Alexandria (SAPCA), acquainted the CYFCC with the history, structure, priorities and initiatives of the coalition. Established in 2007 as a part of the Partnership for a Healthier Alexandria, SAPCA is comprised of representatives from twelve sectors of the community; four of its board members are

youth. Its priorities are alcohol, marijuana and tobacco, in that order. The coalition is funded by a five-year federal Drug Free Communities grant that is about to expire. An application for its continuation is due in March. During the first year of the coalition, a substance abuse prevention plan was developed with researchers of George Mason University.

Subsequent accomplishments of SAPCA include Prescription Take-Back Day, a partnership with local law enforcement and the Drug Enforcement Agency that enables community members to drop off used or expired medications at sites throughout Alexandria. Almost four hundred pounds of prescription drugs were collected at the last event. In addition, Del Ray Pharmacy was a drop-off site for used needles. SAPCA is currently seeking to establish a 24-hour drop off site at the Police Department. During the last Sticker Shock Day, which promotes adherence to underage drinking laws, youth visited 61 establishments. SAPCA also sponsored Community of Concerns Dinners that brought parents and their children together to talk openly about alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use. Over 660 students and their parents attended the dinners. A local state delegate successfully introduced a bill to strengthen Virginia's social host law based on recommendations from SAPCA and the bill became law on July 1, 2011. SAPCA also provided funding for the Developmental Assets survey and Youth Risk Behavioral survey.

YOUTH MASTER PLAN UPDATE

Greg Hutchings and Cynthia Skinner, co-chairs of the Youth Master Plan Design Team, reported the next meeting of the team (which guides the development of the Youth Master Plan) will be January 23.

COMMITTEE UPDATES

There were no committee reports.

NEW BUSINESS

Chair Mann discussed a letter of January 8 regarding discussions and activities underway in the City related to early child education capacity and access (attached). The purpose of the letter, which resulted from a discussion of the CYFCC Executive Committee, was to inform the Mayor and Chair of the School Board of the intent of CYFCC to convene a community discussion regarding the need for a citywide strategy on early care and education, birth to five.

Gwen Mullen recommended additional work to assure private groups are aware of CYFCC, while Glen Hopkins believes such groups are aware but are not sure of the role the commission plays. Questions Mr. Hopkins believes have not been addressed are how many need early childhood education services, what services are needed, and where. Mr. McEneaney expressed a need for broader awareness of special use permits to open or expand the programs of private providers. Mike Gilmore would support CYFCC reviewing such permits.

Mr. Chapman proposed careful consideration of how quickly this initiative moves forward. There was considerable discussion as to the next step. Greg Hutchings recommended inviting providers to a meeting. Chair Mann cautioned against re-inventing the youth master plan and the purview of the City-Schools Long-Range Planning committee, and to think carefully about how resources are deployed. She also advised a conversation that includes communities that have already undertaken such an initiative as well as parties not already included in the discussion. Mr. Hopkins recommended drafting a public policy statement in support of CYFCC serving as a clearinghouse for use permits. Margaret Walsh proposed the Executive Committee engage the co-chairs of the

City-Schools Long Range Planning Committee. It was the position of Mr. Chapman that there should be incentives for providers to participate in the process and advised a review of the strategic plan as well as available advocacy tools.

Deborah Warren discussed a meeting at ACT for Alexandria regarding promoting the importance of early childhood education, including hiring researchers to look at bright spots nationally and working collaboratively on the development of the youth master plan. Rosario Casiano asked why the focus on 0-5 to the exclusion of other age groups. It was the response of Dr. Madye Henson that the objective of this particular initiative is to understand capacity, access and funding for early child education. Quoting Ms. Mullen, 20-25% of students entering school did not attend to pre-school. Joyce Rawlings noted that by definition “private” means paying and hence, there is a need to assure all youth who need to be in pre-school are being served.

Lisette Torres, Coordinator of the Alexandria Campaign on Adolescent Pregnancy, discussed a letter from Dr. Stephen Haering, Director of the Alexandria Health Department, to the Mayor and City Council (attached). The letter documented dramatic improvements in the City’s teen pregnancy rates. The 2011 teen pregnancy rate was the lowest in over fifteen years and a 20% improvement compared to 2010.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, a motion was made to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously.



ALEXANDRIA CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES COLLABORATIVE COMMISSION

Department of Community and Human Services Center, 2525 Mount Vernon Avenue, Alexandria, VA 22301

January 8, 2013

Mayor and Members of the Alexandria City Council
Alexandria City Hall,
301 King St.
Alexandria, VA 22314

Chairperson and Members of the Alexandria City Public Schools Board
Alexandria City Public Schools
2000 N. Beauregard Street
Alexandria, Virginia 22311

Dear Mr. Mayor and School Board Chairperson:

In recent weeks, the Children, Youth and Families Collaborative Commission (CYFCC) has become aware of a variety of discussions and activities underway in the City related to early child education capacity and access. Many of these discussions and activities, we have also learned, are disconnected and risk resulting in future confusion and conflict. We have listed example of such activities below.

- Currently, the Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) is discussing inclusion of new classrooms for preschool age children in its proposed new Jefferson-Houston Elementary School. At the same time, we are aware that a private provider has recently put a substantial down-payment to purchase a new building to expand early childhood education services in the same community as served by the Jefferson-Houston Elementary School.
- ACPS has announced its interest to expand enrollment in its Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI) program – while also struggling to identify options to address the demand for classroom space in the face of a projected significant increase in public school enrollment in coming years.
- Private providers are submitting applications for special use permits to open or expand their programs, unaware that the City government has just embarked on a “Youth Master Plan” process to examine the needs of young people throughout the City, including addressing the need for early childhood education services for children birth to five.

That so many discussions are occurring simultaneously and independently throughout the City suggests that the issue of capacity and access to early care and education in Alexandria has become a top and urgent priority. We view the interest in a favorable manner because science has made the case that investments in the earliest years of life can pay substantial dividends now and in the future in reduced special education costs, reductions in grade retention, and even reduced crime rates in adulthood. Attached to our letter you will find a document that summarizes this science in five facts that we believe are relevant to our work in this area.

The CYFCC was expressly created to encourage and support dialogue and collaboration among disparate groups around issues impacting children, youth, and families in the City. Given this charge, we write to express our plan to convene a community discussion – that includes the broad range of interested parties – about the need for a citywide strategy focused on early care and education birth to five. As City Council and the School Board prepares to move into a period of short and long-term planning in this area, it is critical that we consider needs and the complete array of resources available within the city to meet those needs. We write to request your participation and involvement in these efforts as we act in a manner consistent with our charge.

We look forward to your response and engagement.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Tammy L. Mann", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Tammy L. Mann, PhD
Chairperson

Attachment Included



ALEXANDRIA HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Stephen A. Haering, MD, MPH, FACPM
Health Director

4480 King Street
Alexandria, VA 22302
Phone: 703.746.4956
FAX: 703.746.4938
www.alexandriava.gov/health

MEMORANDUM

DATE: January 8, 2013

TO: The Honorable Mayor and Members of City Council

FROM: Stephen A. Haering, MD, MPH, Director, Alexandria Health Department

SUBJECT: Alexandria Overall Teen Pregnancy Rate Drops to 33.4 per 1,000 for Calendar Year 2011 – Lowest in Over 15 Years – 20% Improvement Compared to 2010

The Virginia Department of Health Division of Health Statistics has published 2011 data on teen pregnancies in Virginia. The City of Alexandria's 2011 teen pregnancy rate was 33.4 per 1,000 10-19 year-old females; this is a 20 percent decline from the 2010 rate of 41.6. This marks the lowest overall teen pregnancy rate Alexandria has had in over 15 years.

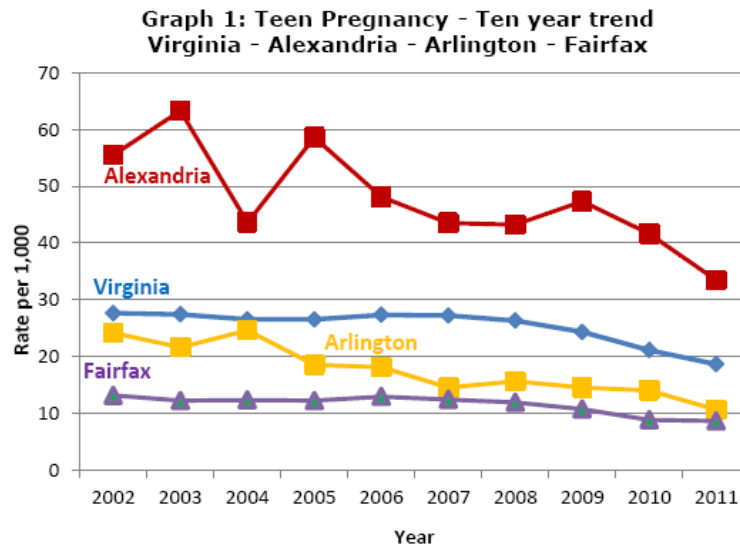
The dramatic improvements in Alexandria's teen pregnancy rates are a reflection of the City of Alexandria's dedication to reducing teen pregnancy through evidence based approaches and strong alliances between city agencies and community partners. There are daily efforts by staff at the Alexandria Campaign on Adolescent Pregnancy (ACAP), Alexandria City Public Schools, Teen Wellness Center (TWC) and mental health counselors, the Department of Community and Human Services, Healthy Families, Resource Mothers, Community Lodgings and Alexandria Neighborhood Health Services, Inc. Unwavering support from Mayor Euille, City Council, Dr. Mort Sherman and the Alexandria City School Board have been invaluable.

While the 2011 data are encouraging, Alexandria's rate of 33.4 is still very high – the Virginia 2011 teen pregnancy rate was 18.6. The 2011 teen pregnancy rates for Arlington County and Fairfax County were 10.6 and 8.6 respectively. Alexandria's 2011 teen pregnancy rate is the third highest in the Northern Virginia region (behind only Manassas City at 52.3 and Falls Church City at 37.2).

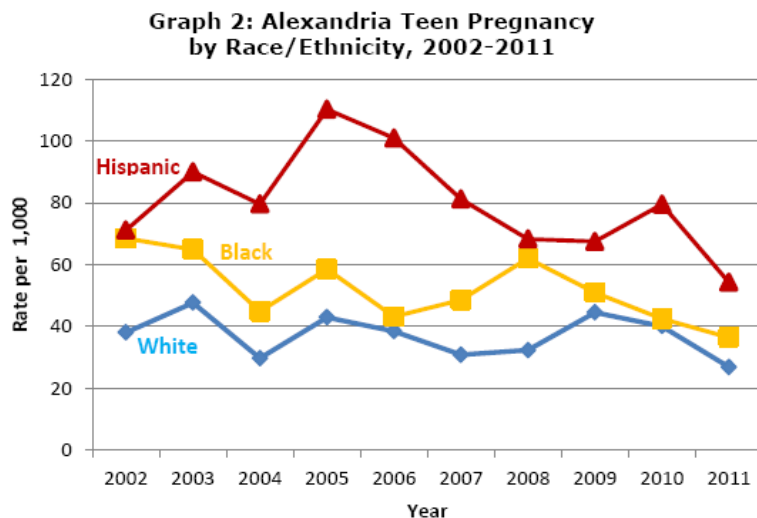
Although Alexandria age groups and racial/ethnic groups saw improvements, the 2011 data demonstrate persistent disparities: white teens had a rate of 26.9 per 1,000, while black teens had a rate of 36.5 and Hispanics had a rate of 54.3.



Graph 1, below, shows the 2002-2011 trends of teen pregnancy rates for Alexandria, the state of Virginia, and Fairfax and Arlington counties. This graph demonstrates that Alexandria's rates continue to be higher than Virginia and our neighbors.



Graph 2, below, shows the 2002-2011 trends for Alexandria's youth divided by their race/ethnicity. While there have been overall improvements for each race/ethnicity since 2002, the graph reveals persistent disparities.



As we celebrate the improvements in Alexandria's teen pregnancy rates, we must acknowledge that the true measure of success will be sustained and continuous reductions in teen pregnancies and the elimination of health disparities.

To achieve this, we must maintain our collective dedication and commitment to protecting our youths' futures by continuing to employ innovative and evidence-based programs. Alexandria Health Department looks forward to continuing this work with our partners.

If you have any questions, concerns or suggestions, please contact me at stephen.haering@vdh.virginia.gov or 703.746.4956.